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Although traces of helium occur in most natural gas, noteworthy proportions have been found only in gas rich in nitrogen. The percentage in helium, moreover, seems to depend, in a measure, on the percentage of nitrogen, though there is not direct proportionality between the two. Some of the Kansas gases contain about 85 per cent of nitrogen and 2 per cent of helium.

After a discussion of the occurrence of helium in minerals and rocks, in mine gases and in the gases of mineral springs, volcanoes and fumeroles, the theories that have been advanced in explanation of the origin of the helium in natural gases are discussed. While recognizing that the origin of the helium is still a matter of great uncertainty, the writer is inclined to favor the view that the helium is derived from deposits of uranium and thorium, probably disseminated through the strata not far beneath the horizons at which the helium gas occurs.

E. S. BASTIN

The Economic Aspects of Geology. By C. K. LEITH. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921.

Because each year modern industry is becoming more technical, industrial progress has come to stride pace after pace with the development of science. Geology has shared with other sciences in the tightening of the bonds between science and industry. It is no longer necessary, as it was a generation ago, for the geologist to be continually bringing before the public the practical potentialities of his science; certain industries are now even snatching the half-fledged geologists from their academic nests. The increasing industrial importance of geology lays a new responsibility upon those engaged in the training of economic geologists, and Professor Leith's book, an embodiment of lectures given at the University of Wisconsin, drives home to the geology student in vigorous fashion not only the fundamental facts of useful mineral occurrence but also the rôle which each of these minerals plays in the economic life of the nation and of the world. The book is, in fact, an outgrowth of its author's war-time experiences during which he distinguished himself as a leader in the first real inventory of her mineral resources that the United States had ever taken.

The work is adapted to the use of students having an elementary knowledge of geology, such, for example, as is commonly acquired in the first year's work in college geology. While adapted for the use of

students, most mining engineers and teachers of geology will find that it gives them not only a new array of facts, but a broadened viewpoint.

After introductory material, a chapter is devoted to the common elements, minerals and rocks of the earth and their origin, and another chapter to a simple exposition of the processes by which mineral deposits are formed.

In the consideration of individual mineral resources, the conventional classification as metallic and non-metallic is abandoned in favor of one that is more expressive of their rôle in industrial life. Early in the scheme come the fertilizer group of minerals, nitrates, potash, phosphates, pyrite, and sulphur. Then come the fundamental fuels, coal, oil, and gas. In the same chapter with iron and steel are treated the ferro-alloying minerals and the minerals fluorite, magnesite, and silica, that find their main use as fluxes or refractories in the iron and steel industry. Other major base metals are followed by the precious metals, and then by minor metals. The commodity chapters are concluded with one devoted to miscellaneous non-metallic minerals.

A feature of the treatment of individual commodities that makes for clarity is the treatment of "Economic Features" and "Geologic Features" under separate heads.

Conservation of mineral resources, particularly coal, comes in for separate treatment in a chapter near the end of the volume. Especially noteworthy are several topics that have received scant treatment, if any, in previous books on economic geology; namely, exploration and development of mineral deposits, the rôle of the geologist in their valuation and taxation, and a brief discussion of the legal aspects of geology.

The book concludes with chapters summarizing the international aspects of mineral resources, on "Geology at the Front" and "Geology Behind the Front."

The field occupied by this book is covered by no other, and few books are likely to fill as useful a place in geologic education.

EDSON S. BASTIN